CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for processing objects within a data processing system in a network, the method comprising:

receiving a message at a computing device, wherein the message comprises a set of message headers and a message body, wherein the message body contains a top-level fragment; and

retrieving a message header from the message, wherein the message header indicates that the message body includes a linking element to a next-level fragment.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

retrieving the next-level fragment; and

combining the top-level fragment and the next-level fragment into an assembled fragment.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising:

obtaining a source identifier for the next-level fragment from the linking element;

sending a request message for the next-level fragment using the source identifier for the next-level fragment; and

receiving a response message comprising the next-level fragment.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein the protocol header is generated by a server that originated the top-level fragment.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the linking element comprises a source identifier, wherein the source identifier is formatted as a URI (Uniform Resource Identifier).

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the linking element is defined using SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language).

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the message is an HTTP (Hypertext Transport Protocol) Response message.

8. An apparatus for processing objects within a data processing system in a network, the apparatus comprising:

means for receiving a message at a computing device, wherein the message comprises a set of message headers and a message body, wherein the message body contains a top-level fragment; and

means for retrieving a message header from the message, wherein the message header indicates that the message body includes a linking element to a next-level fragment.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 further comprising:

means for retrieving the next-level fragment; and

means for combining the top-level fragment and the next-level fragment into an assembled fragment.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 further comprising:

means for obtaining a source identifier for the next-level fragment from the linking element;

means for sending a request message for the next-level fragment using the source identifier for the next-level fragment; and

means for receiving a response message comprising the next-level fragment.

11. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the protocol header is generated by a server that originated the top-level fragment.

12. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the linking element comprises a source identifier, wherein the source identifier is formatted as a URI (Uniform Resource Identifier).

13. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the linking element is defined using SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language).

14. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the message is an HTTP (Hypertext Transport Protocol) Response message.

15. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for use within a data processing system in a network for processing objects, the computer program product comprising:

instructions for receiving a message at a computing device, wherein the message comprises a set of message headers and a message body, wherein the message body contains a top-level fragment; and

instructions for retrieving a message header from the message, wherein the message header indicates that the message body includes a linking element to a next-level fragment.

16. The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising:

instructions for retrieving the next-level fragment; and

instructions for combining the top-level fragment and the next-level fragment into an assembled fragment.

17. The computer program product of claim 16 further comprising:

instructions for obtaining a source identifier for the next-level fragment from the linking element;

instructions for sending a request message for the next-level fragment using the source identifier for the next-level fragment; and

instructions for receiving a response message comprising the next-level fragment.

18. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein the protocol header is generated by a server that originated the top-level fragment.

19. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein the linking element comprises a source identifier, wherein the source identifier is formatted as a URI (Uniform Resource Identifier).

20. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein the linking element is defined using SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language).

21. The computer program product of claim 15 wherein the message is an HTTP (Hypertext Transport Protocol) Response message.

22. A data structure for use by a computing device in defining a message that is transmitted on a network, the data structure comprising:

an indicator that the message is a response message;

a message body; and

a message header indicating that the message body comprises a linking element to a next-level fragment.

23. The data structure of claim 22 wherein the linking element comprises a source identifier, wherein the source identifier is formatted as a URI (Uniform Resource Identifier).

24. The data structure of claim 22 wherein the linking element is defined using SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language).

25. The data structure of claim 22 wherein the response message is an HTTP (Hypertext Transport Protocol) Response message.